

Faculty Assembly Minutes

October 22, 2003

12:50-2:15 pm, Keystone Auditorium

1. Mike Kalton, Chair, Faculty Assembly, welcomed the faculty to the new academic year. The minutes of the last Faculty Assembly meeting, held on May 28, 2003, was approved with amendments.
2. Jack Nelson, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs reported that he and Chancellor Vicky Carwein met almost all the individual units on campus to hear their concerns. This was a first-step measure to respond to the interim Strategic Assessment report prepared for the campus. He mentioned that the concerns varied by units. It was clear that the faculty had more concerns than the staff group. Specific concerns included tenure and promotion process, whether standards for T&P have changed (read raised) as evidenced by one particular T&P case. He emphasized that the university hires to give tenure but there is always that possibility that some don't make it.

He broached the subject of Research 1 status by asking several interrelated questions. What it meant to be a research institute? Does it mean research support? What kind of research support? Is UWT now a different kind of campus, i.e. more research-driven? Does it threaten interdisciplinarity? What is the vision for the campus? Who has one? He also alluded to faculty concerns about leadership, trust, and communication.

Jack said that he believed in professional relationships and he is not necessarily looking for a more personal, familial work environment. He thinks his professional approach is sometimes misconstrued as something else. His sense of black humor seems to add to the problem. He promised that he and Vicky will work toward enhancing communication between the administration and faculty and staff to minimize misunderstanding.

Regarding UWT's relationship with Seattle, he said that there has been a sea change on the part of the Seattle faculty leadership toward Tacoma. The previous administration saw the three campuses as three separate universities, while this faculty leadership is looking at the three campuses as part of one UW system. He mentioned that Doug Wadden and Ross Heath of the Faculty Senate in Seattle think that the Seattle administration will also change their views toward Tacoma, i.e. a change in the inter-campus relationship. Jack doubted such a reversal of views. He said if they did then it would be definitely favorable for UWT.

Jack also mentioned the following:

- On the issue of Summer School, Jack said that the reorganization was aimed to capture more funds for faculty research and for students.
 - He also reported that the process for establishing Schools/Colleges (Milgaard Business School and IAS) at UWT is in motion.
 - Some faculty may have to change their offices as the administration will be consolidating their operations.
 - He organized a dinner for new faculty at his house.
 - A major report was prepared by the Washington Institute of Public Policy. He said several sweeping recommendations were made, some of which were good. For example, having a flexible 2+2 relationship with Community Colleges was a good thing. On the other hand, WIPP thinks that UWT is more a regional university. This led to the issue of what it means to be a research institute.
3. Anthony D'Costa, Vice Chair of Faculty Assembly, and ex-officio member (with vote) of the Faculty Council on Tri-Campus Policy briefly reported on what the FCTCP was doing. He echoed Jack's perceptions of favorable views of the Seattle Faculty Senate toward UWT. There is greater activism on the part of the Seattle faculty leadership to work with issues of concern to the university system as a whole and hence UWT was not being perceived as external to Seattle's concerns. The FCTCP (which also includes Vice Provost Steve Olswang as a non-voting member) is working very hard toward facilitating the conversion of some UWT programs to Schools/Colleges through code changes by "executive orders."
 4. Mike reported on his meetings with various constituencies. He surmised that we are at a turning point, almost at the juncture of a bifurcation of the institution. We will be either at an ordinary place or an interesting place.

He reiterated the Doug/Ross position on advocating a systems view, i.e. a three-campus system. This would be similar to the California and Indiana University systems. In these systems each campus has its own mission and expectations, i.e. something of their own. We need to think of how we relate to Seattle. One motivation for Doug and Ross taking an activist position has to do with the accreditation report. It appears that in the next five years or so about 8,000 new students will have to be absorbed by the UW system. Thus far there is no serious planning going on. It is clear that Seattle can't absorb these new students hence it would be left to UWT and UWB to tackle the problem. Hence, the Doug/Ross-led Faculty Senate leadership is concerned.

Mike reported, as did Jack and Anthony, that we are moving ahead with Schools and Colleges. However, Doug and Ross are concerned that the band-aid approach to code changes is not going to serve the faculty well. Instead they prefer to look at the system as a whole more carefully and more for the long haul rather than apply band aids. Mike cautioned that we have to be prepared to absorb these new students. How we manage this problem has many implications, especially for our

identity. We can't be a flood plain but must be distinctive and hence must act to change the direction of our campus.

There has been a legislative review of branch campuses, which found that UWT and UWB are the most expensive campuses in the system. We are a Research 1 institution as we are part of UW. But our campus is teaching-heavy so we just claim to be R1 institution. The question then is how do we become an R1 institution? Do we become like Seattle or do we distinguish ourselves in some way and yet the R1 status? Alternatively, the issue hangs heavily on the big "identity" question, i.e. how we do define ourselves.

We don't have a President yet. We have to educate the incoming President rather than be dictated by him/her. Mike said this could be a window of opportunity. So it was critical that we begin to work on the identity question, i.e. begin to define ourselves in terms of who we are.

A consultant for conducting the strategic plan is going to be hired. It is imperative that faculty get involved and make a difference to the campus. As it is, the formation of Schools/Colleges is not a small change for the campus. The dropping of \$15 million in one area has huge ramifications for the entire campus. We need to look at the relationships between different programs. Are we professionally boxed in? The IAS program is interdisciplinary. The question is does it make a difference to other programs by relating to interdisciplinary approaches?

A critical issue is the state of the faculty. How do we deal with the morale problem on campus?

Belinda Louie said that the identity problem has been with us from the very beginning. What constitutes research on this campus has been a dilemma. Is it publications, more broadly defined scholarship, or consulting? Mike responded by saying that not everyone is expected to do the same kind of research.

Regarding research, Dave Secord wondered how we were to shape our future. Mike opined that that we could think of an alternative research model, which also varied by program. In the end we need to have multiple conversations on scholarship.

Anthony responded to Dave saying that there's a new committee – Faculty Council on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure – that specifically deals with some of the issues of tenure and promotion (and thus research). These are the very concerns that are a source of anxiety on this campus.

At this juncture Jim Gawel asked as to what the administration's responsibility was in all of this, i.e. in identity formation, shaping our future, and the like. Mike

felt that the administration must grab the opportunity. In the end if the future looked interesting it was because we did something about it.

Myrth Ogilvie said that with Jack and Vicky talking to different units and obtaining feedback it meant the beginning of a dialog. Denise Drevdahl felt the conversations on these issues ought to take place across campus, while Mike thought that there were not enough people in influential positions to carry out such conversations. Marjorie Dobratz recommended that we build on our strengths.

On the question of hiring a consultant for strategic planning, Zoe Barsness asked how the consultant was going to interact with the faculty. Mike stressed that the consultant needs to hear the pressures faced by the faculty.

The meeting was adjourned at 2: 15 pm.

Submitted by:

Anthony D'Costa
Vice Chair, Faculty Assembly